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RELIGIOUS GLEANINGS FROM THE MAGICAL PAPYRI¹

The Greek magical papyri, the first of which attracted attention about 110 years ago^{1a}, lay neglected in the libraries for many decades. After the notice of them by Reuvens², and the first edition, by Goodwin³, of one of them, followed a decade later by Parthey's edition of the two Berlin papyri⁴, and by the edition, by Leemans⁵, of the Leyden papyri, a sudden revival of interest in this literature set in with the first really scholarly commentary on these papyri, published by Albrecht Dieterich, in his dissertation, written, under the direction of Usener, as the Prize Essay for the Bonn Classical Faculty, in 1888⁶. The same year saw the publication of the large Paris papyrus and of some others, by Wessely⁷. Since that time the interest in these documents of a lowly belief and of magical practice has never entirely flagged. In two later books⁸ Dieterich treated a creation myth and an 'Ascension to Heaven', in which, he believed, he had discovered the liturgy of a Mithras congregation. During the last few years a Scandinavian scholar, Samuel Eitrem, has contributed much to our knowledge of these papyri⁹, as, in America, has Professor Campbell Bonner¹⁰.

All the documents thus far discovered are now accessible in the Preisendanz edition¹¹, which lacks only the final volume (this is to contain a separate treat-

ment of the magical hymns, and the Indices) to be the indispensable tool for all future investigation in this field.

What are these magical papyri? Universally they are documents discovered in Egypt. In general, they were written during the third to the fifth centuries of our era by persons who knew Greek none too well, and who also spoke Coptic, as is proved by the fact that some of the documents contain parts of some compass written in that language, sometimes in the Coptic alphabet, sometimes in Greek letters; now and then also the Coptic alphabet has been employed for the writing of Greek pieces. The reason for this strange procedure must be sought in the endeavor to keep the contents secret. Prescriptions in the papyri again and again enjoin upon the magician the deepest secrecy¹²; the practice of magic was a punishable offense¹³. The purpose of the documents is of the lowliest; they are evidently meant to appeal to the humblest stratum of the population. Success is to be guaranteed to some shop or factory¹⁴; a man wants to avert the anger of some one in power¹⁵, or to gain victory in a race¹⁶. The most frequent intention, however, is to help the beloved¹⁷. The best idea of what these magicians wanted to accomplish is gained from a passage in one of the Berlin papyri¹⁸:

'This familiar spirit <parhedros> sends dreams, compels the coming of women and men, raises storms, uncovers gold, silver, and bronze, frees from fetters, opens doors, makes invisible, carries water, fetches wine, bread, any victuals you desire, only no fishes nor any pork. He prepares a costly banquet when you want to entertain company, stops and moves ships, drives out evil demons, tames wild beasts, puts watchdogs to sleep, turns a body into the shape of any animal; he raises you into the air and lets you down again, enables you to walk on the surface of the waters, draws down the stars from the sky, makes weather as you like it, lights extinguished lamps, and is going to be your servant in whatever you wish'.

By this time we may well wonder what all this—low superstitions, sorcery, magic—can have to do with religion. Why pay attention to these gross aberrations of the human mind? Indeed, in the beginning for many years those of us who were attracted to the study of these documents met with the same prejudice in the world of scholars. However, not all parts of the magical papyri deal only with the grosser desires: a goodly num-

¹This paper was read at the Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, held at the College Misericordia, Villa St. Teresa, Dallas, Pennsylvania, May 4-5, 1934.

^{1a}See Theodor Hopfner, *Griechisch-Aegyptischer Offenbarungszauber, in Studien zur Paläographie und Papyruskunde*, Volumes 21 and 23 (Leipzig, 1921, 1924; hereafter, in this paper, designated by OZ); Karl Preisendanz, *Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri*, Volumes 1-2 (Leipzig, Teubner, 1928, 1931 [see also note 19, below]; hereafter, in this paper, designated by GZP); Ernst Riess, *The Magical Papyri, A Source for our Knowledge of Ancient Life*, The Latin Leaflet, Volume 5, Numbers 107-109 (New York, 1904). A good survey, by Theodor Hopfner, of the pertinent literature is to be found in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 14, 301-303. Compare also *Magical Texts from a Bilingual Papyrus*, Edited by H. I. Bell, A. D. Nock, and Herbert Thompson (London, Humphrey Milford, 1932); this book was reviewed, by Professor Campbell Bonner, in *Classical Philology* 29 (1934), 155-158.

²Charles Reuvens, *Lettres à M. Letronne* (Leyden, 1830).

³Charles W. Goodwin, *Publications of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Series II* (Cambridge, England, 1852).

⁴Gustav Parthey, *Abhandlungen der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 57, 109-149 (Berlin, 1865).

⁵*Papyri Graeci Musei Antiquarii Publici*, 2 (Leyden, 1885).
⁶*Jahrbücher für Klassische Philologie, Supplement* 16 (1885), 749-829.

⁷*Denkschriften der Wiener Akademie* 36 (1888), 42 (1893).

⁸Abxaxas (Leipzig, Teubner, 1891); *Eine Mithrasliturgie* (Leipzig, Teubner, 1893). A third edition of this work, by Otto Weinreich, appeared in 1923).

⁹Samuel Eitrem, *Papyri Osloenses in Norske Videnskaps Akademi* (1925).

¹⁰Campbell Bonner, *A Papyrus Describing Magical Powers, Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 52 (1921), 111-118.

¹¹See note 1a, above.

¹²GZP 1.41, 130, and *passim*. For the meaning of the abbreviations here, as in the following notes, see note 1a, above.

¹³See the discussion by Theodor Hopfner, in Pauly-Wissowa, 14, 384-387 (see note 1a, above).

¹⁴GZP 12.99-108. ¹⁵GZP 7.417-422. ¹⁶GZP 7.390-393.

¹⁷GZP 4.95-153, 1265-1274, 1390-1495, 1746-1870, and elsewhere. It is noteworthy that among these many love-charms only four are written for women. The best known literary examples deal with the deserted girl who wants to force her lover to return to her.

¹⁸GZP 1.97-130.

ber of their prescriptions is concerned with what has been called 'revelation magic'. In fact, what first attracted the attention of the investigators of these papyri was the rather large number of poetical passages in the form of hymns¹⁹ which they contain. There are also prayers in prose form, sometimes with a fine rhythmic swing, which remind one of utterances in the Psalms²⁰:

'... You were raised to heaven and the Lord gave witness to your wisdom and he praised your power. . . . I call on you, Lord of the Universe, in this hour of my need; hear me, for my soul is oppressed, and I am deserted and lack counsel; hold your shield over me. . . . save me in this hour of my need. . . .'

Again we read²¹:

'Thanks we express to you, from our whole heart, from our whole soul, a heart which is directed toward you, the ineffable name, honored by the address of GOD, praised by the piety of the Lord, with which you have shown a father's benevolence, love, and friendship, and a strength that makes happy, granting us Thought, the Word, and Knowledge, Thought to think you, the Word to call on you, Knowledge to know you. We rejoice that you have revealed yourself to us. We rejoice that through the knowledge of yourself you have made us divine while we are still prisoners in the body. Man has one way of thanking you, that is to know your greatness. We have recognized you, life of human life, womb of all knowledge, womb pregnant by the begetting of the Father; we have recognized you, Father, who art pregnant with eternal being. Having worshipped you, we have one prayer alone, that we may persevere in your knowledge, prudent never to deviate from this way of life'.

With this we have come to the main topic of this paper, the question of what we can learn from the magical papyri in regard to religion. Even the first editors of these documents were struck by the peculiar commingling in them of divine names from the faiths of many divergent peoples: beside the names of Greek gods, and of Egyptian gods (which, because of the provenance of the papyri, we naturally expect to find in them), there occur very many Hebrew names, also the name of the Persian god Mithras, and a host of seemingly unintelligible, barbaric words. At the time of the first publication of these papyri the nearest parallel seemed to be found in that strange farrago of divinities which we meet in the gnostic systems²², and on those amulet gems which even now are often called gnostic²³. Soon, however, other parallels suggested themselves. In working over the hymns of the papyri, Dieterich found that in their endless enumeration of epithet after epithet these poetic pieces resembled most the so-called Orphic Hymns²⁴, and he attempted, in his Abraxas²⁵, to

pursue the connecting threads. After orientalists also had been attracted to the magical papyri, it was seen that a good many of the so-called *Ephesia grammata* contained words which made sense and that among them a new thread in the warp, namely the Babylonian, could be discovered²⁶. This line of investigation has been continued particularly by Adolf Jacoby²⁷, with the result that nearly one-half of these formerly unintelligible words are now seen to belong to Egyptian, or its daughter-language, Coptic, and to the Semitic branch of languages, with Hebrew predominating.

So far, then, the picture presented by the religion of the papyri is essentially that of the usual syncretism as we know it during the age of dying antiquity. Indeed, the closest parallel to this coalescence of disparate divinities is found in two passages from ancient literature, the so-called Naassene Sermon, preserved for us by Bishop Hippolytus²⁸, and the vision of Lucius, in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius²⁹. The attention of the sorcerers is naturally centered on the two gods of light, Helios and Selene. The former is identified with Apollo, with Mithras, with Ra-Horus, with Yahweh and his chief archangel Michael, the latter with Artemis, with Hecate, with Isis. Of course, both are brought into contact with other spirits of light, particularly with the other five planets and with the twelve constellations of the Zodiac, also with that of the Bear, whose never disappearing configuration gave it the most prominent place among them all, so that it is called the goddess who turns the poles, that is, the universe³⁰, an honor that elsewhere is ascribed to Helios himself³¹.

Where we find the planets and the constellations, we may be certain that we are face to face with astrology. Indeed, astrological elements frequently enter into the magical prescriptions³². In general, the sorcerers are deeply impressed with the curse which the inescapable necessity (the *Heimarmene*), the bitter (or the foul) *ananke* has laid on mankind³³.

In the bewildering crowd of divine beings which appear on every page and in every column of the magical papyri it would seem almost impossible to constitute any order or system. Yet, if one reads and rereads them, certain principles seem to stand out. Among the Greek gods, the gods of light, as I have said, play the chief rôle. Next to them we have, of course, Hermes; he found his place here, in so far as he is a Greek god and not the Egyptian Thôt, chiefly as the conductor of the souls of the dead, the *psychopompos*, for, as we know from other sources, the chief helpers in those magical actions which deal either with love affairs or with curses are the bodies and the souls of the dead, par-

¹⁹GZP 1.207-325, 2.1-11, 81-100, 3.108-229, 4.179-200, 261-278, 436-461, 939-948, 1309-1411, and elsewhere. The same hymn is often used several times in one piece, or occurs several times in the papyri. Preisendanz (see note 14, above) has promised that, in the third and concluding volume of his work on these papyri, he will present a critical edition of all the poetic pieces.

²⁰GZP 1.207-211.

²¹GZP 3.591-610 = Number 41 b in Walter Scott, *Hermetica*, 1.374-376 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1924). <For a review, by Professor Riess, of this work, see The American Journal of Philology 47 [1926], 191-197. C. K.>

²²Hans Leisegang, *Die Gnosis*, e. g. 114, 158, 173 (Leipzig, Kröner, 1924).

²³Charles W. King, *The Gnostics and Their Remains* (London, Nutt, 1887).

²⁴For a discussion of these see Albrecht Dieterich, *Die Hymnis Orphica*, (1891); E. Abel, *Orphica* (Leipzig, Teubner, 1885); Hermann, *Diels, Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 473-482 (Berlin, Weidmann, 1903).

²⁵Albrecht Dieterich, *Abraxas* (Leipzig, Teubner, 1891).

²⁶This is particularly the case with the word ERESCHIGAL, the Babylonian name of the goddess of the nether world. See Drexler, in Wilhelm Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, 2.1584-1587, under Kure.

²⁷In the notes to the GZP.

²⁸He belongs to the third century A. D. The passage occurs in his *Refutatio Haeresium Omnium* 5.7.3. This piece has been edited several times by Richard Reitzenstein, the last time, with a commentary, in *Studien zum Antiken Synkretismus*, 1.161-173 (in *Studien der Bibliothek Warburg* [Leipzig, Teubner, 1926]).

²⁹*Metamorphoses* 11. 8-23.

³⁰GZP 4.700, 1275-1281, 7.686-702.

³¹GZP 4.438.

³²GZP 3.275-280, 4.780, 7.284-299, 795-821.

³³GZP 13.513 τὰ τῆς Εἰμαρμένης κακὰ (in 812 γένεσις is used for 'horoscope'); 635 σῶμα Εἰμαρμένη; 4.526 πικρὰ Ἀνάγκη.

ticularly those who passed away before their time (children, unmarried youths and maidens)³⁴, or those who met a violent death (soldiers, gladiators, murdered persons)³⁵. Then there are the Moirai, Tyche, and the Agathos Daimon³⁶, all beings which reached their prominence chiefly in the later ages of antiquity.³⁷ Occasionally we make a rarer find. Thus we hear of a goddess Psyche³⁸, and of an armed god Phobos³⁹. The interesting feature in all this is the fact that these gods are only in part still the specialized, 'departmental' figures of the genuine Greek religion. They have become universal, in so far as they are the lords of all the elements: Helios rules the water as much as he does the light; he even has power in the nether world⁴⁰. On the other hand, although the papyri are concerned so much with the world of the dead, Hades himself is not mentioned in them, presumably because he had lost his personality, so that the name Hades expressed merely a place. Persephone occurs less rarely; she is usually identified with Kore, who plays a great part.

It may not be amiss to discuss in some detail one or two of the poetic parts dealing with these gods of Greece. We shall turn first to an invocation of Apollo⁴¹; he is asked to come, together with Paieon, from Parnassus and the Delphic Pytho, and also from Olympus. So far we are in a purely Hellenic atmosphere. When, in the twenty-fifth line, he is called messenger (*ἀγγελος*), of great Zeus, we need not yet think of Jewish influence, for messenger of Zeus he is called elsewhere also⁴². But immediately thereafter he is identified with Iao, Michael, Gabriel, Adonai or Adonaïos, and Eloaios; all these are either names of the Jewish god or names of his chief archangels. He is identified also with Abrasax or Abraxas, the year-god⁴³, who is here apparently located on the Greek Olympus. Helios is called also the father of the universe; his figure is identified with the macrocosm⁴⁴, and with the god of unending time, the Aion, originally Persian. More even than all this, he is the commander (*ἡγούμενος*) of heaven and earth, of Chaos and Hades with its demons.

We can easily recognize here the admixture of Hebrew, Persian, and Egyptian elements. If we turn now to a piece of a strangely different character, the so-called Slander (*Διαβολή*) of Selene⁴⁵, we are confronting a magician who is trying to arouse the goddess to do his bidding by telling her of the insults uttered against her by the woman whom he wishes to make his own. The woman has, he says, offered to Selene an

incense-offering consisting of blood, fat, and the faeces of a colored she-goat, the fetus of a dog, the lymph from a dead virgin, the heart of a boy, and other things abominable in the sight of the goddess. Moreover, she has said that Selene killed a man, drank his blood, ate his flesh, used his entrails for her headgear, flayed him and used his skin to cover her private parts, and had eaten of the holy scarabaeus. The woman had also taunted the goddess with the unlawful love that Pan displayed for her; from that union, she says, the 'dog-headed', that is the baboon, has sprung⁴⁶. Here Selene is evidently identified with Hecate, the goddess of demons and of the dead, who is elsewhere called flesheater, bloodrinker, feaster on hearts⁴⁷. Of Pan's love for her we know less⁴⁸, certainly nothing so gross as the statements of our passage are. The features of this accusation thus far are purely Greek, even though they are distorted by the ideas of a later time. But in the first of the two versions of the Slander that are found in the papyrus the goddess is viewed also as androgynous⁴⁹, and she is furthermore identified with Brimo, that is the Kore-Persephone of the Eleusinian Mysteries⁵⁰, perhaps also with Demeter Thesmophoros⁵¹, and she is visualized in the shape of such mixed monsters as a being half bull, half snake, or half horse, half dog⁵², perhaps also as the raging mother of Hades of whom Aeschylus speaks⁵³.

In the invocation of Apollo we observed a strong admixture of Hebrew elements. This is noticeable in all the papyri, but it is limited mostly to the enumeration of names for God and of his angels and archangels. The Hebrew element has been discussed at some length, but only superficially, by a Jewish scholar⁵⁴. It well deserves a more extended treatment. I can mention only a few of the most salient points. Pious Jews do not pronounce the four-letter word (*tetragrammaton*) which forms the name of the Hebrew deity. So we need not be surprised to read in the papyri of the 'ineffable name'⁵⁵, or to see in them the substitution for it of Adonai ('Lord'), which is still in use⁵⁶. It is more surprising that the usual transliteration of the name is IAO, of only three letters, although we find also IAOTH and IAEL⁵⁷. Jewish scholars often substitute for the name YHWH simply the appellative *hashem*, which means 'the name'. But there is in the papyri one passage⁵⁸ at least where the context evidently requires the reading *ὁ θεός*, but where we find *ὁ <sic>* followed by *□*, which everywhere else is employed as the symbol for *δνομα*, 'the name'. The names of angels and archangels, on the other hand, betray the fact that the sorcerers had only a superficial knowledge of the He-

³⁴On *ἀωρος* see Pauly-Wissowa, 14.306, 44.

³⁵Ἡρώες, μονομάχοι, βί<αι>σθένταροι; compare Hopfner in Pauly-Wissowa, 14.306, 40.

³⁶For Tyche see GZP 4.664, 666; for Moirai see GZP 4.1455, 1463, 2318; for Agathos Daimon see GZP 7.500, 692.

³⁷Karl Lehrs, *Populäre Aufsätze*, 175-197 (Leipzig, Teubner, 1875); Otto Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte*, 1084-1087 (Munich, Beck, 1906).

³⁸GZP 4.475; Richard Reitzenstein, *Die Göttin Psyche* (Heidelberg, 1917).

³⁹GZP 13.528; Dieterich, *Abraxas*, 86-93; Roscher, *Lexikon*, 3.2386-2395.

⁴⁰GZP 1.33 (Horus); 3.144, 225, 4.443. That this need not be borrowed from the Egyptians has been well demonstrated by Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 23 (Leipzig, Teubner, 1893).

⁴¹GZP 1.296-325. ⁴²Aeschylus, *Supplices* 212.

⁴³The numerical value of the letters of the name equals 365.

⁴⁴His head is Olympus, i. e. the heavens. Compare Otto Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, No. 21 a (Berlin, Weidmann, 1922).

⁴⁵GZP 4.2622, 2643-2671 (also, with slight variations, and, without the title, in 2574-2607).

⁴⁶On the character of this alleged sacrifice see OZ 1.422.

⁴⁷Dieterich, *Nekyia* 52.

⁴⁸Roscher, *Lexikon*, 3.1403, 10.

⁴⁹GZP 4.2609-2610 *Ἐρμῆν τε καὶ Ἐκάτην ὁμοῦ, ἀρσενιόθην ἔρνος*.

⁵⁰On Brimo see Hippolytus, *Refutatio* 5.8 (compare note 28, above).

⁵¹GZP 4.2612 *θεσμία*.

⁵²GZP 4.2614. Snake and horse-dog (*ἑκτοκύων*) belong to the sphere of the dead.

⁵³Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1189. The papyrus calls her (2615) *νευσίκρανε*, an epithet which points to a very old person.

⁵⁴Ludwig Blau, *Das Altjüdische Zauberen*, 117-145 (Budapest, Landesrabbinerschule, 1898).

⁵⁵GZP 12.237. ⁵⁶GZP 4.92, 1483, and often.

⁵⁷See Pauly-Wissowa, 9.699-702.

⁵⁸GZP 13.358.

brew language; indeed, it seems to have satisfied them to append the ending -EL, meaning 'god', to any base. Yet the traces of Jewish religion are by no means few, and much that has been assigned to Greek origin will probably, on further investigation, prove to be of Hebrew origin, in spite of such astounding mistakes as 'the seal which Solomon placed on the mouth of Jeremiah'⁵⁹, a mistake that occurs in a passage which is so strongly influenced by Jewish ideas and is so filled with quotations from the Scriptures that Dieterich⁶⁰ could ascribe the whole to the sect of the Essenes. Over against this attribution is the fact that no Jewish sect would have countenanced the designation of Jesus as 'god of the Hebrews'⁶¹, or have substituted 140 languages for the 70 of which the Bible speaks⁶². Neither is it likely that a Jew would have transferred the myth of the battle between Zeus and the Giants to the biblical story of the dispersion at the building of the tower of Babel⁶³.

In another connection belongs the fact that the cosmogonic papyrus⁶⁴ from Leyden claims to be the Eighth Book of Moses. Here the lawgiver's name is merely a literary pseudonym. Such a use of this name is no whit different from the use of the names Hermes Trismegistus, Ostanès, Democritus in pseudepigrapha, just as there is a whole Jewish tradition in the field of alchemy⁶⁵, and just as Pliny the Elder also knows of a Jewish magic tied to the name Iannes⁶⁶. Of this tendency to give authority to a forgery by claiming a great name for the alleged writer the papyri furnish ample proof. The names of the well-known magicians Apollonius of Tyana, Astrampsycho, Bitys, Dardanos, Democritus, Pibeches⁶⁷ all occur, in addition to the name of King Psammetichus⁶⁸. In this, too, the magical papyri simply adhere to a well-known tendency of the later Hellenistic period, which in reality deceived nobody but the simple-minded⁶⁹, until, in the general mental obfuscation of the age when antiquity was dying, a real authority was claimed for these forgeries, as is shown by the tradition of Orphic writings and the collection of the *Hermetica*⁷⁰.

Among the magical authorities quoted Ostanès plays no small part⁷¹. With him we have reached a new patch in the crazy quilt of these writings, the Persian and Zoroastrian. We know, of course, that the word *magi* itself is Persian, the designation of the priestly class. Yet, at an early age the word acquired its present connotation; Herodotus (1.132) says that the magi accompanied their sacrifices with an incantation, although he defines the contents of this incantation as a 'theogony'. Perhaps, then, he used the Greek word

(*θεογονία*) simply because both the charm-song and the theogony were chanted in a crooning tone. Ostanès is said to have accompanied Xerxes on his Greek campaign. During the Alexandrian Age he became, apparently, the arch sorcerer; as such he is connected with magic by Pliny (N. H. 30. 8). He appears also in the alchemistic writings.

It remains, finally, to speak of that element which naturally ought to be prominent in writings composed in Egypt, i. e. the purely Egyptian. It is only in keeping with the character of this religion, as we know it from the time of the Ptolemies, that the chief deities mentioned should be those of the Osiris circle. Yet the name Osiris itself is not so frequent as we might expect. Much more attention is paid to his wife and sister, Isis, and particularly to his posthumous son Horus. The reason for this is not far to seek. Cumont⁷² has emphasized the growth of the worship of the sun in later antiquity, a worship which was destined to overshadow all the countless other gods of the syncretistic pantheon. Now Horus was identified with Ra, the sun god of the older religion; we can thus easily understand why he plays so prominent a part in our papyri. In the same way the prominence of Isis simply reflects the respect in which this goddess was held by the whole western world from the third pre-Christian century onwards, a fact which caused Plutarch to devote to her myth a special monograph. The almost overwhelming position which Isis held can perhaps be felt best if we read the eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, with its perverid description of the Spring festival of this goddess. This description furnishes a telling analogy to the magical rôle of Isis in the papyri, all the more because the author of the description was a contemporary of the first composition of our magical papyri⁷³. The identification of the Egyptian deity with Selene, who, as Hecate, is also goddess of the dead, recommended her greatly to these men. The story of the combat between Osiris-Isis-Horus and Seth-Typhon, the evil spirit of darkness, must have appealed to the sorcerers all the more because the sorcerer, like the god, tried to disturb the equilibrium of this world in order to enforce his own will. So we need not be surprised to find also purely Egyptian magical papyri of this same time which present the closest parallels to the Greek documents⁷⁴. As Osiris had been hurled into the Nile and had been resurrected, so it was believed that any one who was drowned in the water of the holy river thereby became a god, an *Esies*⁷⁵, a fiction of which the papyri make use repeatedly. Other gods of the Egyptian pantheon make their appearance—the misshapen Bès or Bésas⁷⁶, Chnum, Phrê, Sebakt, etc. They occur less often in the text proper than among the *nomina barbarica*. It will take much additional investigation on the

⁵⁹GZP 4.3040.

⁶⁰Dieterich, *Abraxas* 138–148. ⁶¹GZP 4.3019.

⁶²GZP 4.3056. In Genesis 10 seventy peoples are enumerated.

⁶³In spite of the rather specious argumentation by Dieterich, *Abraxas* 143.

⁶⁴GZP 13. ⁶⁵Pauly-Wissowa, 1.1339, 1340, 1342, 1345–1349.

⁶⁶Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 30.11.

⁶⁷For Apollonius of Tyana see GZP 11.1; for Astrampsycho see 8.1; for Bitys see 4.1920, 2006, 2140; for Dardanos see 4.1716; for Democritus see 7.167, 795 (here Pythagoras also is mentioned), 12.351; for Pibeches, i. e. Apollobeches, see 4.3067. Compare Pliny, N. H. 30.9.

⁶⁸GZP 4.154.

⁶⁹See Pliny, N. H. 24.160 on Bolos of Mendes, and compare Pauly-Wissowa, 3.676.

⁷⁰See Otto Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, page 25 (see note 44, above); Scott, *Hermetica*, 1.1, note 2 (see note 21, above).

⁷¹He is called 'king' in 4.1929, but a 'Thessalian', i. e. a sorcerer, in 4.2140.

⁷²Franz Cumont, *Die Orientalischen Religionen*, 68–73 (Leipzig, Teubner, 1931. I cite the German edition because it is the one most lately revised by the author).

⁷³See Dieterich, *Papyrus Magica* 780.

⁷⁴Edited by Francis L. Griffith and Herbert Thompson, under the title *The Demotic Magical Papyrus* (London, H. Grevil, 1904; Oxford, 1921).

⁷⁵GZP 4.875, with Preisendanz's note (see note 14, above); Liddell and Scott, under '*Esios*'. It was this circumstance that caused Hadrian to deify Antinous.

⁷⁶On Bésas see Roscher, *Lexikon*, 1.784.

part of the Egyptologists to elucidate and identify them properly.

Working one's way through this vast farrago of divine figures almost makes one's head whirl. We wonder what was the mental condition of the persons who believed in all this *galimathias* and placed their faith in it. Yet we know that the belief in the power of magic was not confined to the almost illiterate persons who wrote the documents before us. The whole series of Neo-Platonic leaders, from Plotinus to Proclus, was as firmly convinced of its potency as were the lowly beings from whose graves the magical papyri have been recovered.

There MUST, then, have been a value in these writings which appealed to the religious feelings of thinkers as well as to the blind faith of the common people. Can we recover this value?

In the first place, the student of the papyri soon becomes aware of the fact that there appear here in full force many of the most primitive manifestations of religious thought. The elaborate ritual with which the plants used in the magical actions must be procured⁷⁷ and the designation of the magnet stone as 'breathing'⁷⁸ are clear examples of that animism which permeates all primitive religions, if it is not, indeed, at the base of them all. Similarly, the transfer of the *pneuma* of one being to another, as from a god to a mortal⁷⁹, belongs to the oldest forms of religious thought. Among the primitive features there appears, of course, the taboo, usually in the form of abstinence from certain foods, particularly meat. It is interesting to see that meat is often called *empsycha*, 'containing the soul'. Here we have an expression harking back to the old view that eating a food gives to the consumer the qualities possessed by that food, a thought presumably underlying the custom of cannibalism⁸⁰, but discoverable also in a much more elevated sphere. Continence in carnal love, too, is enjoined, a command all the more significant precisely because the consummation of carnal love is the purpose of the majority of the magical practices, a fact which seems strangely at variance with the injunction to chastity⁸¹.

The view that through food we acquire the quality or the nature of whatever has been eaten leads us to the point where from the purely material union the thought rises to the higher sphere of the spiritual. That man can become, or at least represent, the god is one of the oldest religious conceptions, about which much has been written⁸². In magic it appears often in the form that the magician tries to enforce his commands to the demons by the statement, 'I am such and such a god'⁸³.

⁷⁷GZP 4.286-295, 2697-3006. Parallels are found in Pliny the Elder and in the Greek medical writers.

⁷⁸GZP 4.1723.

⁷⁹GZP 4.538, 1121, 12.33. Excellently discussed by Dieterich, *Mithrasliturgie* 116-119, and Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Mysterienreligionen*, 284-332 (Leipzig, Teubner, 1927).

⁸⁰On this see Dieterich, *Mithrasliturgie* 100-110. For the relation between food and spirits see *ibidem*, 99, note 3.

⁸¹GZP 4.400-406.

⁸²Large collections of material are to be found in Sir James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, *passim*.

⁸³GZP 1.251 (Coptic), 3.265, and elsewhere.

The idea was as familiar to the Greeks as it was to the Egyptians⁸⁴. The particular form of it here mentioned may be originally an Egyptian element in the hodgepodge, for it appears as a recurring formula ('I am Osiris') in the *Book of the Dead*⁸⁵, the recital of whose sayings was to guide the soul of a dead person safely through the perils besetting its journey. However, a similar statement occurs in the Orphic gold tablets from Petelia and elsewhere⁸⁶, which served an analogous purpose, and, in the form 'I am you and you are I', addressed to Hermes, it is found in another place in the papyri⁸⁷.

Primitive is also the idea that the word is much more than merely a group of articulated sounds, that, to the contrary, it possesses a substance of its own. This holds true specially of the name, which among many peoples is believed to be so peculiarly a quality of its bearer that its choice is of the greatest importance and it becomes advisable to guard its secrecy⁸⁸. So closely are bearer and name identified that one who knows the name of a spirit thereby acquires power over it. Therefore we read in the papyri, 'Do thus and thus, for I know your holy, frightful, ineffable name'⁸⁹.

But it is not only the survival, or, if you prefer, the recrudescence of primitive religious ideas which we can observe in these papyri. Frequently we learn from them that very old beliefs in regard to the well-known and universal gods that had long been abandoned by the higher classes maintained themselves under the surface. Particularly is this the case with the ancient figure of Hecate, who appears in our documents as a fearful being, drinking the blood of corpses, eating their flesh, leading the wild rout of the dead through the air⁹⁰. Here also a goddess Ariste appears⁹¹; of her Pausanias (1.29.2) speaks as a form of Artemis. The name occurs several times as evidently theophoric⁹². But the context of the papyri makes identification with Artemis impossible, for Ariste is called chthonic, and is found in the company of chthonic Hermes, Hecate, Acheron, a *theos chthonios*⁹³, heroes, Amphiaros, souls (*pneumata*), sins (*hamartiai*), dreams, oaths, Tartarus, envy (or evil eye?; *baskania*), Charon, etc. I think that we must

⁸⁴So the Arktoi at Athens, the Bakchoi and the Saboi of the Dionysus cult.

⁸⁵The *Book of the Dead*, Edited by E. A. Wallis Budge, 2.20, 24, 28, 49, 60, 81 (London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1901). Compare Alfred Wiedemann, in Hastings's *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 7.192, 265.

⁸⁶Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, No. 32 (see note 44, above).

⁸⁷GZP 8.36.

⁸⁸Compare the *nomina fausta* of Roman recruits (Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.53). Many savages refuse to reveal their names to strangers (see Sir James G. Frazer, *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, 318, 324 [London, Macmillan, 1914]). Among orthodox Jews the name of a person afflicted with dangerous illness is changed to ward off death (Frazer, *Folk Lore in the Old Testament*, 3.171 [London, Macmillan, 1919]).

⁸⁹GZP. 1.181, 3.500, 624, 4.216, 243-254, 1007, 2241-2345, and elsewhere.

⁹⁰This has been well brought out in Dieterich, *Nekyia* 5-54. The papyrus speaks also of ἀμοφάγοι χθόνιοι (GZP 4.1444). On this conception see Dieterich, *Nekyia* 47-50. They are evidently the dead themselves, who, vampire-like, try to reacquire a semblance of life by feeding on the flesh of persons who have lately died.

⁹¹GZP 4.1443-1455, particularly 1450.

⁹²See Pape, *Wörterbuch der Griechischen Eigennamen*, under Ἀρίστη.

⁹³Perhaps this is an echo of the unnamed *theos* of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

see in this 'best goddess' a euphemism for the dread Persephone⁹⁴.

The relation of the sorcerer to his gods, however, is by no means only that of either the abject worshipper or the theurgos, who by his knowledge and the threats based on this knowledge can compel the gods to do his will. The most striking feature of the papyri, in my opinion, is the frequent expression of a desire for a union with the god or, as they call it, for a *σύστασις*, a word which the papyri use in a special meaning, not, so far as I can see, found in literature. The word closely parallels the term *ekstasis*; indeed, if in the ecstatic condition the spirit steps out of the body or out of itself and enters into the god, the purpose of the systasis is almost the same, with the important distinction that in ekstasis the person gives up his identity and becomes lost in the god, whereas in systasis he changes his nature from mortal to divine, but retains his personal identity. This is, I think, clearly indicated in passages where the term is used in connection with the procurement of a *parhedros*. Thus we read⁹⁵, 'The parhedros will be your companion, will dine with you and sleep with you. The drink which gives this boon puts something divine into your heart'. If the charm is successful, the god and the magician will mingle their breath, a very concrete form of spiritual union⁹⁶. In another magic action with the same purpose it is said⁹⁷, 'Say the first systasis'. Here the successful union is symbolized by a kiss⁹⁸. The sponsor for the efficiency of this union enumerates very many advantages that will surely accrue from the union, and he finally concludes thus⁹⁹, 'After your death, he <the parhedros> will lay out your body as it seems for a god, and he will raise your soul <pneuma> with him into the air. For a spirit of the air <i. e. the deified soul> will not go to Hades, because it has been united <συναρτέον> with the powerful parhedros'. What is here stated merely as one of the numerous advantages of the magical action, though it is placed at the end of the enumeration probably because it was to the author the most valuable of them all, appears in a much more elevated form in the great Paris papyrus as the so-called Mithras Liturgy¹⁰⁰. This is not the place to discuss the much argued question whether this long and interesting piece really represents the liturgy connected with the initiation of the Mithras worshipper into the 'Degree of the Eagle'. We are concerned merely with the conception of the union of the human with the divine and with the mode of its execution. In the first place, the whole papyrus is dedicated by its opening prayer to the divinities Pronoia and Psyche (475), strange as these

figures appear to us. How these two goddesses, purely Greek, came to be connected with an apotheosis in which Helios-Mithras plays the most prominent part has not yet been made clear. It seems evident that the person to be deified is conceived of as a compound of the four 'elements' (air, fire, water, earth)¹⁰¹, but, in spite of this, he is said to have possessed an 'immortal' air and an 'immortal' water (505), which, together with the holy fire, the awe-inspiring water, and the life-giving ether he wishes to see anew (512-515). All this seems to be contained in the figure of the immortal Aion¹⁰². It is noteworthy that the mortal quality, to which the *mystes* knows that he must finally return, is called, not physical or human, but psychical, a use of this word which is found also in the theology of the Apostle Paul¹⁰³. While in the Berlin papyrus the parhedros is forced to descend to the magician, in the 'liturgy' the magician, or, we may say, the *mystes*, rises through the planetary sphere (574) to that of the sun, which here is apparently differentiated from the planets (640), and, finally, to that of the fixed stars, in particular to the Great Bear (700), which is, in general, for the papyri the highest and the most powerful constellation¹⁰⁴. At this point we are also informed definitely about the meaning of the whole ceremony. The initiate prays thus: 'Lord, born again I pass away, being increased <in strength> I die; having been born in life-bearing birth and dissolved into death I go my way. You <the mystes> will then be freed from your soul and not be in yourself'¹⁰⁵. The whole passage is very impressive. It cannot be denied that it is imbued with a strong mystico-religious feeling. It parallels closely what we hear about the ekstasis of the Neo-Platonists¹⁰⁶.

Much more might be said about the religious and mystic details of this Persian-Greek-Egyptian Ascension. But that would mean only repeating what two great scholars have said, much better than I can hope to do¹⁰⁷. Nor can I say anything new about the great cosmogony in one of the Leyden papyri¹⁰⁸, to which I referred when I spoke of the part which Moses has in these documents. This has been treated very satisfactorily by Dieterich, in his *Abraxas*.

One question, however, remains to be discussed. Should we ascribe to the magicians themselves the authorship of these passages so elevated in character, and of the many poetical inserts, the so-called gnostic hymns? If we may not do this, how did they find their way into the papyri? To a certain extent the condition of the papyri themselves answers these questions.

⁹⁴Fire should have been mentioned first, to keep the proper order of the elements as they develop from the original fire or ether.

⁹⁵On this figure of Persian religion see Cumont, *Die Orientalischen Religionen*, 275, n. 108, 285, n. 46 (see note 72, above).

⁹⁶On this use see Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Mysterienreligionen*, 184.

⁹⁷We have several magical actions dealing with this constellation, which is therefore called *Arktiké*: GZP 4.1275-1350, 1351-1380.

⁹⁸GZP 4.718-726. Does not *psyche* here mean 'the mortal part', just as *psychikes* does?

⁹⁹On the visions of the Neo-Platonists see Johannes Geffcken, *Der Ausgang des Griechisch-Römischen Heidentums*, 49, 52-53, 62, 69, 108-109, 208-210. (Heidelberg, Winter, 1920, 1923).

¹⁰⁰See Dieterich, in *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, and Reitzenstein, in *Hellenistische Mysterienreligionen*.

¹⁰¹GZP 13.32-206, 475-664.

⁹⁴Other indications point to the chthonic significance of the element *ἀπύρρο*-. The god Aristaios is chthonic, though not hypochthonic; Aristoboule (Aristoboulos) seems comparable to Euboulos; Aristippe recalls the connection of Hades with horses; Aristoxenos parallels Polyxenos, a well-known epithet of the nether god. A god Agathos seems to be at home particularly on the Island of Cos, as I tried to show in *The Latin Leaflet 4* (1903), Numbers 76, 77. The 'sins', 'dreams', and 'envy' recall the description of the forecourt of Hades in Vergil, *Aeneid* 6.274-284. See also Walter F. Otto, *Die Götter Griechenlands*, 110 (Bonn, 1929).

⁹⁵GZP 1.2 *συνόμιλος, συναριστῶν, συγκοιμώμενος*.

⁹⁶GZP 1.39 *τὸ στόμα πρὸς τὸ στόμα, συνόμιλος τῷ θεῷ*.

⁹⁷GZP 1.57. Preisendanz translates by 'prayer for union'.

⁹⁸GZP 1.78. ⁹⁹GZP 1.176-180.

¹⁰⁰GZP 4.475-830. Compare Dieterich, *Mithrasliturgie*.

Many years ago¹⁰⁹ I called attention to a confusion in the British Museum papyrus 46 (GZP 5.176-297) which seemed to prove that the original was compiled from loose scraps without much regard for their connection (or lack of connection), and that the 'Ring of Hermes' found its way into this theft-charm simply because in this, too, Hermes was invoked! The cosmogony mentioned above appears twice, with only slight variations, in the same papyrus, the first time under the title Monas, or Eighth Book of Moses, the second time as Moses's Holy Apocryphal (or Secret?) Book, called the Eighth or Holy Book. There is also mention of the same alleged author's book named Key, and the closing line of the papyrus promises further excerpts from a Tenth Book (1078). Sometimes we read also variations of the holy names, professedly found by the scribe in a different copy¹¹⁰, and once, at least, an interpretative scholion has found its way into the text¹¹¹. We are thus justified in assuming that our collections were formed from a large number of independent documents, and that the magicians adopted and adapted for their use whatever appealed to them as suiting their aims; in doing this they disregarded the original purposes of the various pieces. So they may have taken over, bodily, hymns and prayers or mystic tales told by some of the many secret cult communities and conventicles which flourished everywhere during the later periods. The papyri may thus really contain pieces of actual cult ritual, though I am still convinced that, for the present, such definite attributions as Dieterich has attempted are extremely questionable. On the other hand, we may well claim the right to use these passages not only to ascertain what the common herd with their dull faith in the force of magic believed of the gods, but also to reconstruct what religious mystics dreamed about the divine powers.

It is merely a bare outline that I have attempted to give. I hope it may stimulate the newly awakened interest in these 'aberrations' of the ancient mind. Much must yet be done before the full import of the magical papyri is realized and before we shall understand clearly why even philosophers of no mean standing looked with awed respect upon the claims of magic to bring man nearer to god.

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SENECA, DE VITA BEATA 19.3¹

The text of Seneca, De Vita Beata 19.3, as it appears in the edition by E. Hermes (Leipzig, Teubner, 1905), runs thus:

...Negatis quemquam praestare, quae loquitur, nec ad exemplar orationis suae vivere: quid mirum, cum loquantur fortia, ingentia. omnis humanas tempestates

¹⁰⁹The Classical Review II (1896), 412.

¹¹⁰GZP 13.757.

¹¹¹GZP 13.21.

¹For the purposes he had in mind, Professor Alexander found it sufficient to quote exactly, without expressing approval or disapproval of it, Gertz's text, adopted by Hermes. I think it worth while to point out that Dr. J. W. Basore (see note 5, below), gives the text, so far as the *ductus litterarum* is concerned, exactly as Professors Gertz and Hermes gave it. His punctuation, however, is different, and, to my mind, much better. He writes *vivere. Quid mirum...evadentia? Cum...distrahuntur. At maledici...sunt. Crederem...* He evidently joined *Cum...conentur* with what follows, exactly as Professor Alexander would have us do. C. K.

evadentia? cum refigere se crucibus conentur, in quas unusquisque vestrum clavos suos ipse adigit, ad supplicium tamen acti stipitibus singulis pendent; hi, qui in se ipsi animum advertunt, quot cupiditatibus tot crucibus distrahuntur. at maledici et in alienam contumeliam venusti sunt. crederem illis hoc vacare, nisi quidam ex patibulo suo spectatores conspuerent.

This is a difficult passage. On it Hermes, after accepting M. C. Gertz's *constitutio loci* in his famous edition of 1886², feelingly comments thus³: "ne sic quidem enuntiatio intellego". The confusion in the paragraph is due partly to a manner of expression which is inherently obscure, partly to the succession of *cum*-clauses (*cum loquantur* . . . , and *cum* . . . *conentur* . . .). According to Seneca's usual arrangement these would constitute a rhetorical parallelism within the same sentence. Here, however, Gertz is certainly right in separating them, and in assigning them to two different sentences, so that *cum loquantur* . . . looks backward, *cum* . . . *conentur* . . . forward.

Since I cannot follow the translations offered by M. A. Bourgerie⁴ and Dr. J. W. Basore⁵, I am bound to offer one of my own, one which, I trust, will render *cum refigere* . . . *distrahuntur* more intelligible.

'... Though they <the maligned philosophers> try to release themselves from their crosses—into which each of you <critics> drives with his own hand his own particular nails—, yet, when they are punished⁶—, as in fact they are, because no human being can escape punishment for moral failure—, they hang on one cross only. Those who punish themselves are stretched on just as many crosses as they entertain desires....'

In the last sentence of this version "Those" corresponds to "each of you" above.

What follows (introduced by *at*) is no doubt to be understood as a suggested excuse for our not being quite so severe on those critics as, in fact, Seneca is showing himself all through these chapters (compare e.g. 17.4, 18.2, 19.2). It is, in my judgment, a mistake to alter at all the reading of Codex Ambrosianus: *at maledici in alienam contumeliam venusti sunt* . . . I would keep that reading, and punctuate thus, *at maledici in alienam contumeliam, venusti sunt*, and I would render this by '... But, it will be urged, showing themselves sharp-tongued in insulting others, they are witty . . . ' Let us remember that on occasion Roman wit was rather mordant. Did not Seneca himself write a 'Pumpkinification' of Claudius which rather tries our taste?

Seneca's reply (19, ad finem) is, 'I should believe that this <privilege of being witty> was open to them, were it not for the fact that some persons from their gibbet spit on the spectators'. This is a perfect answer to the plea in extenuation which has just been offered, and returns naturally enough to the idea of crucifixion which ran through the long sentence preceding. The *nisi qui-*

²Hertz's edition of Seneca, Dialogi XII, was published in Copenhagen by the Libreria Gyldendaliansa (F. Hegel and Son).

³In the Apparatus Criticus, page 217, line 2.

⁴In S  neque, Dialogues, 2.23-24 (Paris, Association Guillaume Bud  , 1923).

⁵Dr. John W. Basore has published two of the three volumes of his version of the Moral Essays of Seneca, in The Loeb Classical Library (1928, 1932).

⁶The text here is *ad supplicium...acti...* Following Professor Alexander's use of the 'expanded translation' I should render these words by 'when they are brought <by others> to punishment....' I should render *qui...advertunt* by 'Those who, by their own act<ipsi>, punish themselves....' C. K.

dam clause is a way of saying that there are some forms of criticism which are impermissible and indeed intolerable. Seneca intends to imply that there are critics of his life and works as filthy in their verbal vilifications as some of the victims of actual crucifixion prove themselves to be, in their physical expression of hatred and antagonism to any chance spectators who come within their reach, for example, by spitting on them. Compare the description of Cato's experience in this regard, *De Constantia Sapientis* 2. 3. It appears to me that it is Seneca's feeling that such a physical procedure and that of vindictive and unscrupulous critics should not be tolerated (*concedere*). Hence I am led to suspect that *crederem* is really a copyist's error for *ccederem* with a bar over the first *c*, i.e. a compendious form of writing *concederem*⁷.

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TACITUS ON CHANGES OF STYLE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

Everyone is aware of the changes that have taken place in the style of public speaking of our own times in contrast, let us say, with that of twenty-five years ago or more. Even the nomenclature has changed. The Departments of Rhetoric and Oratory of the old Col-

lege curricula have been replaced by Departments of Speech, a name officially adopted by the teachers of this branch of learning as far back as 1917. The very words *oratory* and *orator* have apparently unattractive connotations. An excerpt from the official publication of the National Association of Teachers of Speech¹ will serve to illustrate this point:

"...Oratory in the classical sense of the term, as an art taught, studied, and pursued, has practically ceased to exist, and has almost become the traditional subject of a gibe or a sneer". With this statement of Earl Curzon, made ten years ago in an address at the University of Cambridge, most modern students of public speaking will readily agree....

The implications of these remarks reproduce ideas expressed in Tacitus, *Dialogus De Oratoribus* 1:

Saepe ex me requiris, Iuste Fabi, cur, cum priora saecula tot eminentium oratorum ingeniis gloriaque floruerint, nostra potissimum aetas deserta et laude eloquentiae orbata vix nomen ipsum oratoris retineat, neque enim ita appellamus nisi antiquos: horum autem temporum disertis, causidicis et advocatis et patronis et quidvis potius quam oratores vocantur.

Perhaps, too, many modern listeners would agree with Aper when he says of ancient orators (*ibidem*, 21):

Equidem fatebor vobis simpliciter me in quibusdam antiquorum vix risum, in quibusdam autem vix somnum tenere.

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⁷I think Professor Alexander's emendation possible, but unnecessary. The Romans regularly used *credo* when the belief to which they were referring seemed to them absurd. If one wanted to say, 'So-and-so believes (fancies) that the moon is made of green cheese', he would naturally say *Credit quidam*.... C. K. >.

¹W. M. Parrish, *The Style of Extemporaneous Speech*, *The Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 9 (1923), 345.